
Family Matters



Quarterly News & Information About Kentucky's Family Courts

November 1999

Letter from the Coordinator:

THIS ISSUE

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September and October have been busy, and productive, months for family courts in Kentucky! This issue of Kentucky's family matters welcomes six new judges and their family court staff to the challenging work ahead. These courts have faced the challenges of facilities, equipment, and supply procurement, suffered the indignities of having robe companies flooded by Hurricane Floyd, phone lines refusing to permit receipt of any calls, and computer disks refusing to accept data, and, despite all obstacles, the courts have persevered with implementation. Growing a court with all new staff and putting a new concept from theory into practice is no small feat, and we applaud all of these courts.

We celebrated the new courts with a Family Court Orientation held October 5-8 at the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky. This gathering of all ten family court projects served as a forum for learning about the Court of Justice and family courts, the exchange of ideas for smooth implementation and program development, and the opportunity to meet the other individuals involved in this work. The orientation was a resounding success with over 150 attendees including judges, clerks, staff attorneys, secretaries, and support workers. Special thanks to the Jefferson courts for hosting the second day in the new Justice Center and also to the many AOC central office managers and personnel who taught or facilitated breakout sessions and assisted us in numerous tasks. Chief Justice Joseph E. Lambert addressed the gathering with words of encouragement and support. He specifically addressed the constitutionality of creation of a family court project, and spoke of the significant statewide interest in on-going developments. The group was given the charge to work diligently to justify the faith the legislative and executive branch has demonstrated with the appropriation of resources to implement these projects, and to continue to positively impact the children and families who come before the court. I am confident we will.

This issue contains for your use an address and phone list of the ten family court projects, and is focused on a brief introduction and an update of all the courts, and their progress. We also attempted to answer any questions lingering from discussions at the Family Court Orientation. Future editions will include progress bullets from each court, and highlight the special programs or activities of one or two courts, as well as other relevant family law or social service articles.

Thank you again to all authors and contributors. You are appreciated.

Carla Kreitman/Manager, Department of Family Courts

Kentucky's family matters is a forum for the exchange of ideas and information relevant to family courts. The viewpoints expressed in the articles submitted do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the Administrative Office of the Courts. The Dept. of Family Court does not guarantee the accuracy of the information contained in submitted articles and is not responsible for any errors, omissions, or results obtained from use of the information.

FAMILY COURT SITE UPDATE

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

We would like to say farewell and good luck to Joe Santamore with her new position here at AOC with the Education Department. It has truly been a pleasure working with Joe.

We would also like to welcome Angie DeHart as our new Family Court Specialist. Angie came to Family Court from the Foster Care Review Board program where she worked for 4 years as a supervisor and field coordinator. Angie received her Masters of Social Work from the University of Kentucky in 1993. Welcome aboard, Angie.

BOONE/GALLATIN....

Barbara Yelton
Family Court Administrator

We are one year old and growing fast. This has been a rewarding year for the families in Boone/Gallatin Counties. Judge Bramlage has heard 33 adoptions, 23 delinquency, 158 dependency abuse/neglect matters, 2,020 domestic/dissolutions, 525 domestic violence cases, 915 paternity cases, 292 status cases, 3 termination and 23 delinquency cases. The dockets are running very smoothly. Judge Bramlage has started hearing juvenile public offenses which have been reviewed and referred by the district court judges.

The Boone/Gallatin Family Court has recently undergone a staff change. Judge Bramlage appointed Barbara Yelton as the Family Court Administrator. Ms. Yelton was born and raised in Covington, Kentucky, and attended Holmes High School. She moved to Pendleton County where she worked for the Pendleton County Board of Education for nine years while attending Northern Kentucky University. During that time she interned with the St. Luke Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program in Falmouth, Kentucky. With that knowledge she assisted Honorable Jack Arnold in the Pendleton County District Court with families dealing with alcohol problems. In July 1984 she was employed by the Administrative Office

of the Courts as a Pretrial Officer in Pendleton County and later transferred to Kenton County. When the Court Designated Worker Program was started in 1987, Ms. Yelton transferred to the Boone/Gallatin County to implement the program in the 54th Judicial District, and now she is excited to again be part of a new and growing program.

The advisory council is now meeting every other month as much of the work has been done. The mediation rules were submitted at the June meeting and after some discussion they were accepted. The other committees are in the final stages of completion of their local rules.

The Families in Transition (FIT) program is running successfully with facilitators from five separate agencies offering classes to meet the needs of the participants. The feedback has been very positive. Included are some of the comments on the evaluations: "It helped my child and myself more than I could have imagined."; "Very helpful in understanding what my child may be thinking or going through."; and "The FIT class helped me to learn how to better deal with the children's feeling through the divorce and how to handle myself. Great Program!"

The Family Court has been instrumental in the formation of a Youth Collaborative in Boone County and after numerous meetings over the past several months the pilot project of Truancy Mediation Program will begin this school year. The two sites for the initial project are RA Jones Middle School in Florence and Walton Verona Independent School. The focus of the project will be to decrease the number of trancies in Boone County by recognizing potential problems and helping to alleviate those problems before the child has a truancy charge filed against him or her. After a student has reached the point at which he or she has only one more un-excused absence before charges could be filed for habitual truancy, the child, parent and school officials go to a mediation session. During the mediation the parties will have access to community services in order to address the underlying reasons for the attendance problems. At the time of the mediation the parties will enter into an agreement which outlines the conditions with which the family needs to comply. If the child does not meet the terms of the agreement, then the school will pursue the truancy charges with the Court Designated Worker.

The Youth Collaborative is very pleased that the professional mediation group, Partners in Mediation, has volunteered their time to preside over a mediation session which will generally meet once a week in Walton as well

as Florence, depending on the need.

It is hoped that by focusing on middle school children the truancy problem will decrease among high school children in the future and that this project will help strengthen the family and meet identified needs. The Youth Collaborative consists of officials from the local schools in Boone County, representatives of various community service organizations, the staff of the Family Court and the Judge.

Gallatin County community is looking at the Vision 2000 model to better serve the residents and has formed a partnership to develop a mission statement, goals and objective. Judge Bramlage and members of her staff are actively involved in the Gallatin County Community Partnership.

CHRISTIAN....

James Bailey
Court Administrator

Judy A. Hall, Family Court, Christian County, was sworn in August 25, 1999. After graduating from the University of Kentucky in 1978, Judge Hall practiced in western Kentucky handling domestic relations cases and as a public defender and assistant county attorney in juvenile court. From 1987 to 1993, Judge Hall handled termination of parental rights cases in western Kentucky for the Cabinet for Human Resources. From 1993 to 1999, she served as domestic Relations Commissioner of the Christian Circuit Court. Judge Hall has a daughter, Amanda, who is 22 years old and attends Western Kentucky University.

Jim Bailey, Family Court Administrator, was born and raised in Christian County. Before becoming family court administrator, Jim was employed in the Christian County Clerk's Office for nearly 20 years. Jim and his wife Teresa, have two sons. Their oldest son, Nathan is a 21 year old Agriculture Education Major at Murray State. Their younger son, Matthew, is a 15 year old soccer player at Hopkinsville High School. When not in the office, Jim can be found on their farm attending to the beef cattle they raise.

Michael D. Hawkins, Christian Family Law Clerk is originally from Frankfort, Kentucky, but has lived mostly in Nashville, Lexington and Louisville during the past 10 years. Michael graduated from Transylvania University in Lexington in 1996 with a B.A. in History, including membership in Phi Alpha Theta

(history department honorary society.)

He also graduated from the Louis D. Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville with a J.D. in 1999, where he was a member and editor on the *Journal of Law and Education*.

Jennifer Chello, Support Worker, received a B.S. from Florida State University in 1997. While at F.S.U. she was a member of the "World Renowned Marching Chief Band" and completed an internship with the Florida Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigation. She worked as an adolescent substance abuse counselor and a juvenile probation officer prior to coming aboard as one of Christian Family Court's staff.

Debbie Kumpfmuller, Judicial Secretary is a native of Hopkinsville. She and her husband Thomas have 2 children, Ashley 17, attends Christian County High School and a son Clay who is in the 5th grade at Millbrooke Elementary School. Debbie and Thomas are also expecting their third child, Haley Paige on November 30th.

MADISON/ CLARK....

Donna Barney
Family Court Administrator

Jean Chenault Logue, a native of Richmond, Kentucky, was appointed by Governor Paul E. Patton to serve as Family Court Judge for the 25th Judicial Circuit, consisting of Madison and Clark Counties, on August 5, 1999. Judge Logue graduated in 1984 from Eastern Kentucky with a B.B.A. in Economics and Finance. She received her law degree from the University of Kentucky Law School in May of 1988. Upon graduation, Judge Logue was an associate with the law firm of Sturgill, Turner and Truitt in Lexington until 1990 when she joined the law firm of Ecton and Chenault in Richmond, Kentucky. While practicing at Ecton and Chenault, Judge Logue maintained a heavy domestic case load in addition to practicing in the areas of probate, real estate and corporate law. Judge Logue served as the Assistant Madison County Attorney from 1990 to 1993, Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney from 1993 to 1997 and Richmond City Attorney from 1997 until her appointment as Family Court Judge. Judge Logue currently serves on the Board of Directors of several organizations, including C.A.S.A. of Clark and Madison Counties, Pattie A. Clay Foundation, Inc. and the Kentucky Bar Foundation. On

October 19, 1999 Judge Logue was selected as the 1999 Woman of the Year by the Richmond Business & Professional Women's Club. She is married to Howard Logue, and they have one son, James Howard Logue. Judge Logue is the daughter of retired 25th Judicial Circuit Judge James S. Chenault and Dorothy Chenault.

Donna Barney, Court Administrator, graduated magna cum laude from Eastern Kentucky in 1984 with a B.A. in Paralegal Science. She received the Paralegal Achievement Award in the spring of 1985 from Eastern Kentucky University's Department of Government. In 1998 she graduated summa cum laude from the University of Kentucky with a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science. She has been inducted into the paralegal honor society Gamma Beta Phi, the national honor society of Phi Kappa Phi and the national library science honor society, Beta Phi Mu. Donna worked as a paralegal and office manager for the law firm of Ecton and Chenault in Richmond, Kentucky for 14 years until accepting the position as Family Court Administrator for the 25th Judicial Circuit.

Staff Attorney Stephanie A. Litteral is a May 1999 graduate of Oklahoma City University School of Law in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Stephanie completed her undergraduate education at the University of Kentucky where she graduated in 1995 with a B.A. in Political Science and was a member of the University of Kentucky Delta Chapter of pi sigma alpha National Political Science Honor Society. While in law school, Stephanie worked as an editor for the Supreme Court of Oklahoma and completed an externship with Legal Aid of Western Oklahoma.

Michael Asher brings many years of experience to his position as Support Worker. Mike graduated from Eastern Kentucky University in 1972 with an Associate degree in Therapeutic Recreation. In December, 1973 Mike began working with the Department of Social Services (now Community Based Services for Families and Children) in Berea, Kentucky where he was employed until his retirement in June of 1997.

Judicial Secretary Ellen W. Surgener is a native of Christianburg, Virginia, but has lived in Kentucky for the past thirty years. She was an Assistant/Loan Servicing Officer for First Federal Savings and Loan for fourteen years before entering the legal field as a legal secretary for the firm of Ecton and Chenault in Richmond, Kentucky.

FLOYD COUNTY....

Dovie Damron

Family Court Administrator

Floyd Family Court Judge Julie Paxton was sworn in on July 16, 1999, before a standing-room-only crowd. Judge Paxton's husband, Marty and children, Jackson and Clara were part of the ceremony along with her father, Judge Billy Paxton of Muhlenberg County. Judge Julie Paxton, a native of Muhlenberg County, came to Floyd County 13 years ago. She received her B.A. from the University of Kentucky and law degree from Chase College of Law. Her past legal experience was Assistant Floyd County Attorney from 1987 to 1990; associate with the Prestonsburg Office of Boehl, Stopher and Graves; and associate with Riley, Walters and Damron. Her law practice has consisted of civil practice, workers' compensation and family law.

Dovie Damron, Court Administrator, comes to Family Court from the Floyd Circuit and District Clerks' office where she was employed for over six years. Dovie has worked in various agencies that deal with family court issues. She is a member and recruit officer of the Floyd County Council of Domestic Violence Committee, and she also served as a member of the committee to get a Family Court for Floyd County that was headed by Supreme Court Justice Janet Stumbo. Dovie and her husband Robert have two children, Robin, 27 and Sean, 24, and one granddaughter, Kennedi Alexis age 17 months.

LeAnn Francis, Support Worker, attended Eastern Kentucky University, where she obtained her Bachelor's of Social Work degree. After graduation she was employed by the Cabinet for Families and Children, Department of Permanency and Protection in Fayette County. Later she made the decision to return home to Floyd County and was employed by the Cabinet For Families and Children, Department for Social Insurance, and Division of Family Support prior to her employment with the Floyd Family Court staff.

Jennifer Burke, Staff Attorney, is a native of Floyd County. Jennifer graduated from Centre College in 1985 and the University of Louisville School of Law (Brandeis Law School) in 1988. After an absence from Kentucky for several years Jennifer returned to Lexington in 1995 where she was employed by State Farm Insurance. In 1998 she made the decision to move back to Floyd County so her two children Burke, age 10 and Alexander, age 6 could experience growing up in a

smaller community and to be closer to their family.

Debbie Woods, Judicial Secretary, attended Prestonsburg Community College, Lexington Technical Institute and Mayo Vocational School's court reporting program. Debbie worked as a free lance court reporter for 13 years. Just prior to her employment with Family Court Debbie had enjoyed a year at home with her two children, Wesley, 11 and Kiersten, 5.

The transition to Family Court has been a smooth one. Judge Paxton began hearing cases on August 20 with her first Motion Hour. On August 26th, the first Advisory Council meeting was held. With much enthusiasm of all who attended, it became evident that all the proposed committees would be formed and filled with caring people. The following committees were formed: Children's Waiting Area Committee, Counseling Committee, Dependency-Neglect-Abuse Committee, Divorce/Mediation Committee, Domestic Violence Committee and Education Committee.

FRANKLIN COUNTY....

The Franklin County Family Court is well on its way to being in full operation. The judge has been sworn in, the staff hired, and the court has begun hearing cases. Judge Reed Rhorer was sworn in as the Franklin County Family Court Judge on September 1, 1999. Judge Rhorer held the office of District Judge for nine years before being appointed to the family court judgeship. He received his undergraduate degree from Vanderbilt University in 1975 and his J.D. from the University of Kentucky in 1978. Judge Rhorer resides in Frankfort with his wife Karen and his three children Jennifer, Kendall, and Halden.

The Judicial Secretary is Ann Lewis. Ann served as District Judge's Secretary for two years before coming to family court. A native of Lexington, she graduated from Tates Creek High School and attended the University of Kentucky. She has lived in Frankfort for the past twelve years and makes her home with her husband Lonnie and their two sons Taylor and Blaine.

The Family Court Support Worker is Jennifer Dodds Miklavcic. She graduated with her MSSW from the University of Louisville. She has been involved in work with Hospice; drug, tobacco and alcohol intervention; child support enforcement; divorce education; and AIDS education. She is a swim coach for Frankfort High School and the Franklin County

Country Club. Jennifer lives in Frankfort with her husband Greg.

Matthew Krygiel has joined Franklin Family Court, as the Law Clerk. Matthew comes to the Franklin Family Court from the Warren Co. Family Court where he served as law clerk to Judge Huddleston. Matthew received his Juris Doctor from the University of Kentucky College of Law in 1998. While at U.K. he served as a staff member on the Journal of Natural Resources and Environmental Law. He has a B.A. in government from Western Kentucky University. Prior to joining family court he was a clerk for the law firms of Bell, Orr, Ayers & Moore and Harned, Bachert & Denton in Bowling Green. He was an intern for the Legislative Research Commission in Frankfort during the 1994 legislative session.

Judge Rhorer is currently hearing juvenile matters, domestic violence, and paternity cases. In November he will begin hearing all domestic relations matters. The family court staff will be responsible for taking emergency protective and domestic violence orders. The staff will be trained by the District Clerk's office to handle these matters.

LINCOLN/ROCKCASTLE/PULASKI

Lisa Beth Rogers

Family Court Administrator

Judge Debra Hembree Lambert graduated from Eastern Kentucky University with a bachelors degree in child and family studies and received her law degree from the University of Kentucky College of Law in May of 1989. Upon her admission to the bar, she practiced law in Mt. Vernon until she was sworn in as Judge of Family Court on September 1, 1999. As a general practitioner, a good deal of her law practice focused on family matters. Judge Lambert is married to Chief Justice Joseph Lambert, and they have two sons, Joseph, age fifteen, and John, age eight. They reside in Mt. Vernon, Ky.

Lisa Garner Rogers, Court Administrator has an extensive background of experience in mental health and substance abuse. In addition to her court duties, Lisa is also a small business owner in Somerset.

Connie Speaks Cable is a 1999 graduate of Eastern Kentucky University with a bachelor's degree in social work. Former work experience includes a clerical background as well as internships with the department of Community-Based Services and Hospice

of Lake Cumberland. Connie lives in Somerset with her husband, Ricky. They have two children, Jeremy, age 14, and Natasha, who is married and recently gave birth to their first grandchild, Skyler.

Jacindia Denney Wells, Law Clerk is a 1998 graduate of Eastern Kentucky University with a bachelors degree in paralegal science. Jacindia gained experience from positions within the banking industry and a private law firm. She and her newlywed husband, William share a home in Burnside, Ky.

June Coleman comes to Family Court with thirty-eight years of experience as a legal secretary. She lives with her husband, Danny, on a farm near Mt. Vernon. They have two adult children, Adam 28, and Christy, age 24 and one grandchild, Isaiah. The staff made visits in September to Warren and Pike counties. Both sites gave us invaluable insight into Family Court.

On September 22, we conducted our first Family Court Council meeting for Lincoln County. Response was excellent, and Family Court Councils have begun in Pulaski and Rockcastle counties as well. On September 29, the staff attended the regional teleconference at Somerset Community College on collection of court-ordered child support receipts.

The Family Court staff has met with all three local Departments of Community-Based Services to introduce ourselves and discuss available resources.

Judge Lambert is ordering child support when DVOs are entered and county child support representatives are present for DVO court to assist in entering UIFSA compliant orders.

McCRACKEN COUNTY....

Nita Pursley

Family Court Administrator

Another new Family Court in Kentucky is taking shape quickly since the appointment of Cynthia E. Sanderson as Judge on August 5, 1999. Judge Sanderson has selected staff members and drafted plans for the new court. The Family Court Advisory Council has been formed and had its first meeting on September 9, 1999. The Council has formed several sub-committees that are busy making plans.

Judge Sanderson has practiced law in Paducah for eighteen years, concentrating her practice in family law. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Kentucky in 1977 and her Juris

Doctor from Salmon P. Chase College of Law in 1981. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and a trained mediator. Judge Sanderson served as the Domestic Relations Commissioner and Master Commissioner for McCracken County from 1989 through 1992. Following law school she worked as an Assistant Public Advocate. She served as a member of the Kentucky Child Support Guidelines Commission before her appointment. She has written and published a book, *Child Support in Kentucky, Calculate the Payments*, and contributed writings to the KBA *Children's Rights Handbook*. She presently serves as President of the McCracken County Bar Association. She looks forward to the challenge of serving as Family Court Judge and hopes to be a positive influence in the lives of children and families coming before the Court.

The Law Clerk for the McCracken County Family Court is Jane Osborne, a 1985 graduate of Murray State University and a 1988 graduate of the University of Kentucky College of Law. Ms. Osborne has served as a Judicial Law Clerk of the Supreme Court of Kentucky, an Assistant Public Advocate, Assistant County Attorney and maintained a private law practice, focusing primarily on Family Law.

Lyell S. Collins, the McCracken Family Court Support Worker, received his Associate of Arts Degree in Selected Studies from San Diego Mira Mar College. While at Mira Mar College he served as Vice President of the Student Council and was a member of Alpha Gamma Sigma Honor Society. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice Administration at San Diego State University. He attended the graduate degree program at the University of San Diego in Paralegal studies. He has served the Commonwealth of Kentucky for over five years as a Pre-Trial Officer and Court Designated Worker. Lyell was the recipient of the Kentucky Supreme Court's Law Day Award in 1997 and 1998. He received the Order of Kentucky Colonel from Governor Paul Patton for his service to Kentucky's youth.

The Court Administrator for the McCracken Family Court is Nita Pursley. She brings more than fifteen years of experience with law firms in Paducah, the most recent being for Judge Sanderson prior to her appointment. Ms. Pursley received her education at Paducah Community College. In addition to her legal experience, she has been an administrative assistant at an accounting firm, a barge line, a hospital, and an executive secretary at a local bank.

PIKE COUNTY....

Glenda Lyons

Family Court Administrator

Glenda attended a meeting in Rockcastle County on July 7, 1999, to discuss issues relating to Family Court development in a rural area.. On July 16, 1999, Judge Burke taped a segment on WYMT's Issues and Answers, The Mountain Edition, on channel 57, a CBS affiliate. It aired on July 19, 1999.

Dr. Joe Brown, Ph.D., University of Louisville, trained twelve individuals who are interested in facilitating the Families in Transition Program (FIT). Joyce Worrix attended the training and has worked diligently coordinating with the facilitators to provide space and the supplies necessary to teach the classes. Judge Burke set August 1999 as a goal to have the FIT program implemented in Pike County and our first class began on August 10, 1999.

John Austin, Staff Attorney, was instrumental in constructing Pike County's Family Court WEB page. The WEB page has our Rules of Court, where we are located, how to contact Family Court, and the latest activities of Judge Burke and staff. It is still under construction. Our address is <http://www.aoc.state.ky.us:231>. Come visit us. Lets all say "Big Bucks" and Good-Bye to John. His last day with Family Court was August 20, 1999. He is leaving to go into private practice in his home town of Owensboro.

Judge Kathryn Burke has collaborated with Bill Belcher, Christian Appalachian Project Director, and Cabinet for Families and Children to provide Domestic Violence Perpetrators with counseling in Pike County. Mr. Chris Griffith, Counselor with Christian Appalachian Project, now travels to Pike County on Tuesdays. Before the classes were structured in Pike County, the perpetrators had to drive to Floyd or Johnson County.

WARREN COUNTY....

Maggie Pearson

Family Court Administrator

Judge Margaret Ryan Huddleston presided over the first official function in Warren County's new Justice Center, the evening of September 2, as community leaders gathered to celebrate one year of successful collaboration with Family Court and to plan for the future. More than 70 people attended the reception honoring the

first anniversary of Warren County's first Family Court. These included representatives from city and county schools, the Cabinet for Families and Children, The Housing Authority of Bowling Green, LifeSkills, Community Action Agency, Western Kentucky University, Rivendell Behavioral Health Services, the Bowling Green Police Department, Cumberland Trace Legal Services, various branches of the Warren County Justice System and attorneys, counselors and other professionals that make up the Family Court Advisory Council. Mr. Jim Gildersleeve, Warren County Court Administrator, guided a tour of the new Justice Center.

Judge Huddleston reported to the group that a total of more than 2,700 juvenile, divorce, child custody, support and domestic violence hearings have taken place in the Warren Family Court. Reports were also given by the members of the council regarding the status of ongoing Family Court projects, including the highly successful Truancy Diversionary Project, the Family Court Parent Education Project, mediation of divorce cases and the development of *Pro Se* packets, which will allow low-income families greater access to the court system. Family Court is looking forward to implementing a new Children's Waiting Room, as well as setting up business permanently in the new Justice Center, as soon as the building is completed this fall.

New Family Court Logo

Congratulations to Mike Howard/ Print Shop Supervisor for winning our Family Court Logo Contest. Entries were displayed and voted upon at the October Family Court Orientation. Thank you and congratulations Mike for an outstanding job!

Questions asked at the Family Court Orientation which required consideration, research or finesse:

Are all cases enforced by the Friend of the Court IV-D cases?

The statute which governs friend of the court appointment, tenure, duties, and compensation is found in KRS 403.090. The fiscal court of any county may authorize a friend of the court, which appointment shall be made by the Circuit Court. Very broadly stated, the primary duty of the friend of the court is to supervise and enforce the payment of child support which is attendant to a dissolution action. (For more specificity, refer to KRS 403.090(1-8). Subsection 7 specifically provides when a friend of the court is acting as a designee of the cabinet, and the applicant for Title IV-D services has requested a modification of child support pursuant to a divorce or other judicial order, that the friend of the court shall seek the modification providing all jurisdictional requirements are met. In this instance, the friend of the court's representation shall extend only for the limited purpose of seeking a modification of an existing child support order consistent with the provisions of KRS 403.212.

It should be noted here that not all counties have friend of the court offices, and while some have in the past contracted with the cabinet for the collection and disbursement of child support, there is new federal law impacting the collection of child support which centralizes this process.

— Carla Kreitman, Manager, Dept. of Family Courts

Can judges be networked with their staff for calendaring purposes?

Yes, the question is which is the right software package to accomplish this. We recommend that Outlook 2000 be the software of choice and we hope to be able to upgrade from Outlook 97 to 2000 next year after the Y2K issues and KyCourts is rolled out in Jefferson County.

— Michael Donnelly, Manager, Information Systems

If you have direct deposit - does any reimbursement check go through direct deposit? If so, how are we advised when payment is sent?

Travel, meals, and accommodation reimbursement is handled through AOC Accounts. At the present time, it is possible to have the reimbursement checks electronically deposited. The official or employee would need to print "EFT" preceding their social security number on the appropriate line requiring social security number. AOC Accounts utilizes a new automated accounting system (MARS) developed by the executive branch of state government. Because this system is still very new there is, at present, no means for notification that funds have been deposited. In time, as enhancements are made to this system, we expect some means of notification to be worked out. It is because of this awkwardness and inconvenience that no announcement has been made as to current capability. Currently, if an official or employee chooses to have the reimbursement check direct deposited, they would have to be prepared to wait a few weeks and then contact their bank to determine whether the check has been deposited.

— Rita Cobb, Manager of Personnel

In a paternity case where DNA is ordered and Respondent is not the Father do you go ahead and dismiss the case and then do a show cause order to pay the blood test fee?

This depends on the individual judge and how he or she chooses to proceed. Perhaps a judge would like to tackle this question in an upcoming article, and propose some suggestions? Any volunteers?

— Carla Kreitman, Manager, Dept. of Family Court

After training in Lexington (Basic Mediation), I was told I needed 20 hours of co-mediation before I could be certified. Will AOC pay - travel time and meals to get certification? Also - can I do this (mediation) after court hours for people who want pre-divorce mediation? Will I be able to receive payment? Also what about conflict of interest? Liability insurance, etc.

An initial protocol for approval of training was included at the Family Court Orientation. (See Orientation manual, in Court Administrator's Breakout) There are limited resources to provide training and no training will be approved which replicates something offered by the Department of Education Services, AOC. The goal and purpose of any approved Family Court training is to enhance skills and tools necessary for the performance of the requirements and responsibilities of the recipient's present job. It is a requirement, per the drafted protocol, that new information or knowledge gained be shared as a resource for all the family courts.

Kentucky at present does not recognize any certification of mediation (although there are clearly national models which do, and individual providers of this training require certain procedures.) Any certification program, whether accrual of necessary CLEs to retain good standing in the KBA, or certification as a MSW or mediator, are undertaken on your own time and at your own expense.

This question actually raises several interesting issues, e.g. acting as a mediator on your own time, receiving compensation for the work, and acting as a mediator for the cases which come before your court. Please refer to your personnel manual regarding conflict of interest. There are significant problems with the court ordering individuals into a program which inures to the benefit of a court employee. There are also potential conflict of interest problems which arise with secondary employment. The personnel policies require you to discuss this with your appointing authority prior to engaging in any secondary employment.

—Carla Kreitman, Manager, Dept. of Family Court

JEFFERSON FAMILY COURTS CHILDREN'S WAITING ROOM

Beginning November 1, 1999, the Children's Waiting Room (# 4550 on the fourth floor of the Judicial Center is being staffed by volunteers from the Exploited Children's Help Organization (ECHO). ECHO is a non profit volunteer organization committed to reducing the incidence and trauma of child victimization/exploitation.

The Children's Waiting Room provides children with a safe, low-stress, fun place to wait while their parents are in court. The waiting room is filled with toys, books, and games to help pass the time. This provides the volunteers with the opportunity to offer the children nurturing attention.

Children benefit by having this room because they are not required to wait in crowded tension filled public waiting areas.

The waiting room is open during the Emergency Protective Order, Dependency, Neglect and Abuse Dockets.

The Children's Waiting Room hours are as follows:

Monday	8:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday	8:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
Wednesday	8:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
Thursday	8:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.

For further information regarding the Children's Waiting Room, please contact Philip Moore, Family Court Support Worker at (502) 595-4788 or Cherie Dawson, ECHO, at (502) 636-3670.

FAMILY PLACE VISITATION CENTER

Jefferson Family Court has entered into a new agreement with Family Place to provide supervised exchange and supervised visitation services for families who have divorce, paternity, and/or domestic cases before the court. These cases must be ordered by a Jefferson Family Court Judge to qualify for service. Family Place is located at 983 Eastern Parkway. This new partnership replaces the services previously provided by the Family Support Center at the University of Louisville.

The Visitation Center enables Family Place to support families in the community who have sensitive family issues and expands efforts to prevent child abuse. Services are available Wednesday and Friday evenings, as well as seven hours on Sundays.

For more information, contact Family Visitation Director Pat Dintaman at (502) 636-280 ext. 250 or Family Court Support Worker Mary Lou Cambron (502) 595-4787.

LAW STUDENT MEDIATORS FOR PRO BONO CASES

The Samuel L. Greenebaum Public Service Program at the Louis D. Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville has implemented a pro bono mediation program for Family Court cases. There are eight "Ed Perry Fellows" at the law school who have completed over 70 hours of training in basic, family, and divorce mediation skills at Just Solutions Inc. Each of the law student mediators is certified by Family Court to mediate family and divorce matters. The law students mediate at no charge and in conjunction with other more experienced Family Court certified co-mediators.

Cases are eligible for law student mediation if the parties are represented by counsel acting on a pro bono basis or if the parties are pro se and the court believes the costs of mediation would place a financial hardship on the parties.

For further information contact Jina Seinta, Program Assistant, Samuel L. Greenebaum Public Service Program at (502) 852-5647 or Robin Fisher, Family Court Legal Assistant and Ed Perry Fellow at (502) 595-0864.

DIVORCE EDUCATION - WHAT'S OUT THERE?

*Angie DeHart
Family Court Specialist*

As the newest staff member at the AOC, Department for Family Courts one of my first projects is to gather some basic information on the numerous divorce education programs offered throughout the Commonwealth. My initial estimation is that approximately 26 jurisdictions offer some type of divorce education. Among the most popular programs are Parent's Education Clinic, Families in Transition (FIT) Parent's are For Good, Kids Time and Helping Children Cope with Divorce. Each program varies significantly in their fee collection, administration and facilitation and length and content.

AOC developed a website with information regarding court mandated divorce training. The address is <http://www.aoc.state.ky.us/cmdt/welcome.html>. The site is being updated and linked with the Family Court and Court of Justice sites.

It is our goal to assist each of Kentucky's Courts with the implementation of divorce education training and in the maintenance and evaluation of existing programs. We would also like to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas between jurisdictions and to ultimately provide consistent access to divorce education training throughout the state.

Boone / Gallatin **Dist. 54**

1st Floor of old Courthouse
P.O. Box 991
Burlington, KY 41005
Ph# (606) 334-3520
Fax # (606) 334-3521
Hon. Linda Bramlage- Family Court Judge
Barbara Yelton - Court Administrator
Melissa Elam - Judicial Secretary
Tony Lovensheimer - Law Clerk
Stephen Penrose - Support Worker
Pat Gutzeit - Boone Circuit Clerk (606) 334-2149
Sue O'Conner - Gallatin Circuit Clerk (606) 567-5241

Christian Co. **Dist. 3**

715 South Virginia Street
2nd Floor
Hopkinsville, KY 42240
(270) 889-6038, 889-6039
Fax # 889-6040
Hon. Judy A. Hall - Family Court Judge
James Bailey - Court Administrator
Deborah Kumphmuller - Judicial Secretary
Michael Hawkins - Law Clerk
Jennifer Chello - Support Worker
Gary Haddock - Christian Circuit Clerk (270) 889-6539

Clark/ Madison **Dist. 25**

P.O. Box 1415
Richmond, KY 40476-1415
Hon. Jean Chenault Logue - Family Court Judge
Donna Barney - Court Administrator
Ellen Surgener - Judicial Secretary
Stephanie Litteral -Law Clerk
Mike Asher - Support Worker
Sharon Mahan- Clark Circuit Clerk (606) 737-7264
Linda S. Cates - Madison Circuit Clerk (606) 624-4793

Floyd Co. **Dist. 31**

127 S. Lake Drive
Prestonsburg, KY 41653
Ph. # (606) 886-9901
Fax # (606) 886-9995
Hon. Julie Paxton - Family Court Judge
Dovie Damron - Court Administrator
Debbie Woods - Judicial Secretary
Jennifer Burke - Law Clerk
LeAnn Francis - Support Worker
Doug Hall - Floyd Circuit Clerk (606)886-9902

Franklin Co. **Dist. 48**

310 St. Clair Mall Suite 100
Frankfort, Ky 40601
Ph# (502) 564-2278, 564-2280
Fax # (502) 564-2311
Hon. Orville Reed Rhorer - Family Court Judge
Vacant - Court Administrator
Ann Lewis - Judicial Secretary
Matthew Krygiel - Law Clerk
Jennifer Miklavcic - Support Worker
Janice W .Marshall - Franklin Circuit Clerk (502) 564-8380

Jefferson Co. **Dist. 30**

Jefferson County Family Court
700 W. Jefferson St. STE. 220
Louisville, KY 40202-4730
Jim Birmingham - Court Administrator
Minette Adams - Asst. Court Administrator
Ph# (502) 595-4392
Fax # (502) 595-3472

Lincoln/Pulaski/Rockcastle **Dist. 28**

203 Mt. Vernon Street Suite B
Somerset, KY 42501
Ph# (606) 256-1831,
Fax# (606) 256-5652
Hon. Debra Hembree Lambert - Family Court Judge
Lisa Beth Rogers Court Administrator
June Coleman - Judicial Secretary
Jacindia Wells - Law Clerk
Connie Sue Cable - Support Worker
Edith Moser Cox - Lincoln Circuit Clerk(606) 365-2535
George F. Flynn - Pulaski Circuit Clerk (606) 677-4029
Teresa Vanzant - Rockcastle Circuit Clerk(606) 256-2581

McCracken Co. **Dist. 2**

McCracken Co. Courthouse
301 South 6th St.
Paducah, Ky 42003
Ph# (270) 575-7133
Fax # (270)575-7135
Hon. Cynthia Ellen Sanderson - Family Court Judge
Nita Pursley - Court Administrator
Francis Wright - Judicial Secretary
Deborah Osborne - Law Clerk
Lyell Collins - Support Worker
Mike Lawrence - McCracken Circuit Clerk (270) 575-7383

Pike Co. **Dist.35**

324 Main Street Suite 201
Pikeville, KY 41501
Ph# (606) 433-7061, 433-7062,
Fax # (606) 433-7063
Hon. Kathryn Burke - Family Court Judge
Glenda Lyons - Court Administrator
Justine Dotson - Judicial Secretary
Kyle Deskins Law Clerk
Joyce Worrix - Support Worker
David Deskins - Pike Circuit Clerk (606) 433-7557

Warren Co. **Dist. 8**

1001 Center Street Suite 304
Bowling Green, KY 42102
Ph. # (270) 746-7144
Fax # (270) 746-7147
Hon. Margaret R. Huddleston - Family Court Judge
Maggie Pearson - Court Administrator
Kim Tucker - Judicial Secretary
Vacant - Law Clerk
Teresa Christmas - Support Worker
Pat H. Goad - Warren Circuit Clerk (270) 746-7400

Courts Mark Adoption Change

Reprinted from a 9/23/99 Courier Journal article

by Rick McDonough

Wenetta Thompson has a big house near Chicksaw Park in Louisville and a big food freezer. She shops for groceries that are on sale and cooks in large quantities "It's like a cafeteria at our house," she said.

Thompson, 32 used to have just two children, Miracle, 15, and Quinton, 11. Today she is the mother of nine. She adopted seven children, gaining enough to field her own baseball team. The oldest of the new Thompson children is Ron-Nisha, 12; Kiara, 10; David, 9; Briona 8; Dy-Nasti, 7; Danielle, 3; and Dexter, 18 months. The transformation of the Thompson family was part of an unprecedented flurry of adoptions in Jefferson Family Court that gave permanent homes to 49 children.

The one-day record was arranged by the court and the Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children to draw attention to changes that have speeded up the adoption process statewide. Kentucky, which recorded 166 adoptions last year will have more than twice that number this year, state officials said. They attribute the quicker pace to changes in state and federal law.

The changes will help end the "limbo" of life in foster homes and institutions, where many children find themselves after they have been taken away from unfit parents, said Chief Jefferson Family Court Judge Richard FitzGerald. In the past, he said, needless bureaucratic delays in terminating parental rights have delayed options.

"Every child deserves a home with loving adults," said Viola Miller, Secretary of the State Cabinet for Families and Children. "Adoption is a miracle for families," said Jefferson County Judge Rebecca Jackson, who proclaimed it Adoption Wednesday.

The 1997 federal Adoption and Safe Families Act says states should seek to terminate parental rights for children who have been in foster care 15 out of 24 months. If states don't comply with the law, they could lose federal money.

The new state law, which took effect last year, required Miller's cabinet to speed up final determination of adoption cases.

The effect of the law has been to get judges, social workers and state lawyers to place more emphasis on adoption. The cases used to languish sometimes because other problems often seemed more pressing, said FitzGerald and Jefferson Family Court Judge Mason Trenaman.

Another helpful change they said, has been allowing foster parents to adopt children who have been placed in their care. A law that prevented foster parents from adopting was removed years ago, but judges and state officials continued to discourage such adoptions until recently.

Thompson had been the foster mother of the seven children - her nieces and nephews until the adoption.

After the courts took them away from her sisters, Thompson agreed to take them because she didn't want them to go anywhere else. She had to quit her sales job at a department store, but she received a state subsidy for each foster child living in her home. She will continue receiving the subsidy because she adopted a sibling group of three or more children, which qualifies a special needs case.

Finances are only one of the problems of raising nine children, she said. Simple tasks, such as doing laundry, cooking and keeping the house clean, become major chores. "But by the grace of God, we do it." She's looking for a new car, one with a lot of seats to replace her 1982 Buick station wagon, which was damaged when another auto ran into it recently.

The state social worker who oversaw Thompson's adoptions, Sky Tanghe, said she is a special mother with a gentle manner whose children respond obediently. "She sees them not as adopted kid," Tanghe said. "They are *her* kids. She's doing this from her heart."

JEFFERSON COUNTY TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

Joni Brown

Mary Jo Gleason

“All things are possible if you believe in yourself.”

In Jefferson County, Kentucky, a number of individuals are taking part in a unique program to assist children in the realization that this is so. The Truancy Court Diversion Project is a collaborative effort between the school system, the court, and other community based programs and services. In the beginning, there was recognition of a great need for developing alternative methods of attacking the growing problem of truancy within the community. The concept for the project was conceived in 1997 through a combined effort of Jefferson Family Court Judge Joan Baer, the Jefferson County Public School System, and Court Liaison Linda Wilhelms, and modeled on Jefferson County's Drug Court protocol.

The program was funded by a grant of approximately \$15,000 from the Louisville Bar Foundation. The grant provided the program its initial jump start by providing funds to be used for training, tutoring, incentives, and emergency assistance for families in crisis. In reality, the grant allowed the project the flexibility and freedom to meet individual needs in ways larger government grants do not. The program was able to provide much needed aid to a family “burned out” in an apartment fire, transported 60 elementary children and their parents to Blackacre Farm where they learned survival tips together, and funded a family fun night for 20 children and their families to enjoy an evening of singing, playing, and communicating.

The planning stage required the identification of the components necessary for success, including the commitment of a judge, a willing school, skilled professionals who share a common vision, access to quality services, and families who were willing to take part in the project. Upon identifying each of these factors, the program was launched in December 1997 at Meyseek Middle School as the pilot project site. With the start of the 1998 - 1999 school year, the program involved participation by four elementary schools and four middle schools. At the completion of the school year, the schools participating and the individuals conducting court at each site were as follows:

Englehart Elementary School - Judge Richard Fitzgerald
Iroquois Middle School - Judge Kevin Delahanty
Jacob Elementary School - County Attorney Dolly Berry
Lincoln Elementary School - Judge Patty Walker-Fitzgerald
Meyseek Middle School - Judge Joan Baer
Portland Elementary School - Judge Steve Mershon
Southern Middle School - Judge Richard Fitzgerald
Western Middle School - Judge Mason Trenaman
Western Middle School - County Attorney Tim Longmeyer

In the 1999 - 2000 school year, the program will expand to include three more elementary schools thanks, in part, to the receipt of a \$72,000 grant received from the Jefferson County Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Council. About 80 groups in the area applied for a portion of the \$680, 575 which was awarded to local groups. Winners targeted children ages 6-13 and provided strong programs which attempt to reduce truancy and provide safe, drug and alcohol free environments for children, which are specific goals of the council.

The key to success in the program is the fostering of positive attitudes concerning school performance and attendance by parents, guardians, and other influential adults. The professionals involved in the program are individuals who understand the correlation between school absences and other problems which may be occurring in the child's home. In fact, the program is unique in that it has direct judicial involvement prior to formal court intervention.

The entire program is based upon the notion that truancy is a family problem rather than an

individual problem. Therefore, the goal is to identify the underlying problems and address them in a manner which maximizes the resources available, not only to the child in question, but the family unit as a whole. Some of the services available to the children and their families include parenting classes, Saturday School, behavior contracts, drug screening of children (as requested by parents), tutoring, psychological assessments, anger management, referrals to other community-based support programs, referrals to programs offered through Youth Services Centers and Family Resource Centers, programs relating to issues of substance abuse and domestic violence, and violence-abatement classes. The philosophy of the program is to identify and meet whatever needs the child and his or her family may have. Therefore, there is no limit to the potential services which may be rendered.

Students and parents have reported satisfaction with the program. The program runs for approximately ten weeks, and involves 20 families at a time at the middle schools, and ten families in the elementary school programs. The program is strictly voluntary, and intended as a diversion project to keep kids out of the court system. To be eligible, the students must have missed approximately 20 or more days of school and have had no prior court involvement. Once a family has been accepted into the program, the family signs a release and undergoes an assessment. Upon completion of the assessment, the program is better able to link the family with proper services. However, if a child or family fails to comply with the program, the case is sent directly to court. Positive attitudes and accomplishments are the core elements of making this a successful program. As a result, in order to maintain the program's credibility, it is imperative that those selected to participate in the program follow its directives.

A typical morning in truancy court begins with both children and their parents/guardians arriving and the presiding official calling the session to order in a somewhat formal, yet relaxed manner. Generally, some discussion of current events and their impact on the children precedes the actual review of attendance. Next, the students are called one by one to speak to the judge, and their parents join them at this time. The judge speaks to the child and parents about progress and then announces how the child is doing. Generally, the remarks are positive and the room applauds the child's, and the family's, efforts. This promotes the idea that everyone cares about the child and provides positive reinforcement for the children, as well as the parents/guardians, which is often lacking in the family unit.

Preventive justice is the key. Cooperation from all players is needed. Once the ball is dropped, a child could be lost forever. Studies from across the country demonstrate that once children become involved in the juvenile justice system they are lost. Research shows that less than five percent of all juvenile delinquents have not been truant. This is a staggering statistic which only contributes to the notion that we must reach truant children before it is too late. Our society has become one in which litigation and crime have become all too prevalent. Assisting our children in receiving the support needed for the creation of a positive environment in which they can thrive is a crucial factor in the program. It could mean the difference between a success story or a lost child.

While the program is still in its early stages, early results show a decrease in attendance problems and an increase in grade point averages. The program does more than just tell children to go to school. It attempts to change the way the child and family think regarding the importance of school attendance. As a whole, the children, as well as their families, are improving. At a recent session at Meyseek Middle School, the children and their parents were asked to write down what they had learned over the course of the ten-week program. The insights provided by both were astounding. One child reported that "I have more self-confidence within. I have the ability to do more with myself, and I believe in myself as well as others." One parent alluded to the positive impact all the players had on her child. She stated that, "Every adult that comes here, either with a child or to watch, shows the kids that they are important. They deserve to have adults care, and it does make a difference."

Those are encouraging words for those involved with the project. It provides the foundation on which the program can continue to grow and provides the support and positive commitment that children so desperately need so that every child may be able to realize that all things are, indeed, possible if you believe in yourself.